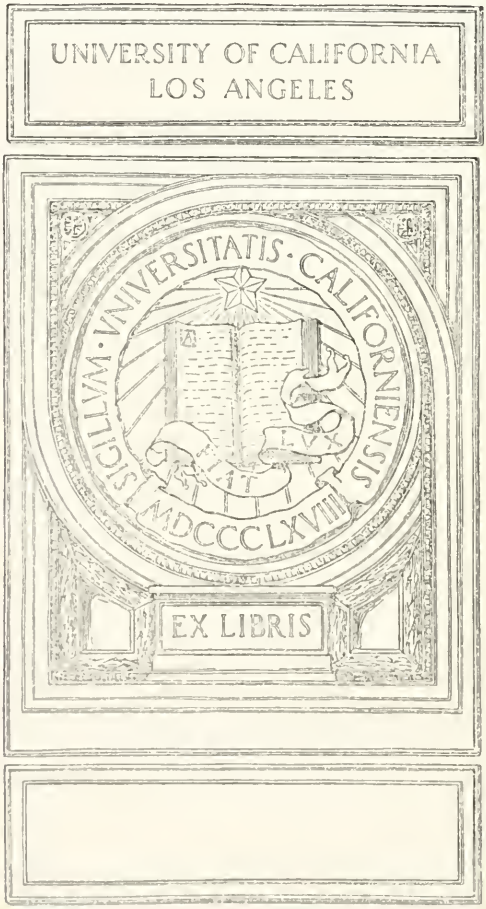
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THE HONOR OF THE LAWE.

VVritten by Thomas Churchyard Gent.

Imprinted at London, by *Ar. Hatfield, for William Holme.*

1596.



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English Dept.

To the right honorable ſir *Thomas Egerton* knight, Lord keeper *of the great ſeale, and one of the Queenes Maieſties priuy counſell,* Thomas Churchyard *wiſheth long life, continuance of vertue and iuſtice, with euerlaſting credit and good fame.*

THe gladnes good men did ſhow (right honorable) when God & our gracious Prince placed the great ſeale in your hands, called vp my muſe that ſeldom ſleepeth, to awaken the world with ſome verſes, that vertuous men may conſider of. They are but the inuention of time, practiſe of pen, ſuffrance of old cuſtom, and the boldnes of a writer, that often ſalutes men of great worth with bookes and bleſſednes, in the firſt entrie of their worldly honor. This ſpoken to your L. as one to whom the Lord of Lords (as I know) hath giuen great graces, not onely to iudge well of good mens cauſes, (which prolongs life) but likewiſe to anſwer the hope that great and good perſonages haue in your L. And ſo being called to greatnes (a fortune not common) great matter is exſpected, and in iuſtice the full effect of your greatnes ſhall be ſeene (I doubt not) bicauſe the choſen and annointed of the Lord hath choſen you (among a multitude) to ſit in the charitable ſeat of iudgement, where pity is a pleader, patience a hearer, mildnes a looker on, and mercy is a iudge. Now the good report of the world (which I heare) beſides the good diſpoſition in your owne mind are preſently come to make a proofe and daily triall of your vertues: ſo leauing your Lordſhip to the goodnes and grace of the almighty, I humbly craue good acceptation of my ſimple plaine verſes, (that I call the Honor of the Law) written in a franke motion of the good will I haue alwaies borne towards your honorable good fortunes.

The honor of the Law.

THe law where iudge is plaeſt in princely ſeat,
Cam firſt from God(who would reform mans mis)
And well maintaind, with skill and wiſdom great,
And honord much, long lovde and feared is,
Grace ſpreds the bowes, & goodnes brings forth frute,
Time ripens all, and hales the harueſt on,
Law threſheth corne, and helps each poore mans ſute,
To ſow new ſeed, ere all old graine be gon:
But Iuſtice rules, (by order) all the cawes,
And is of right, the honor of the lawes.

Prowd, rich or poore, to Iuſtice are alike,
No parſhall eie, it hath but cleerly ſees,
Where to defend, to fauor, kill or ſtrike,
And lookes into the ſtate of all degrees,
With loue and law, is Iuſtice ioined ſtill,
The one keepes right, as hen doth clock hir broode,
The other gains the heat of warm goodwill,
Which is the cream, and milk of Chriſtian foode:
Iuſtice wins that, and like a Lady ſtands,
VVith equall weights, and ballance in hir hands.

VVhat bears no poize, like feathers flies away,
VVhat keepeth weight, and ſtamp doth currant pas,
VVhat muſt be helpt with grains and doth decay,
Is clipt too neere, or neither gold nor glas,
The currant coin, that iuſtice doth allow,
Is cald iuſt law, true dealing and good mind,
A ſtamp that may, in any world go throw,
And with both friends, and foes may fauor find:
Thus Iuſtice doth both law and lawyers gide,
Sees who aimes right, and who ſhoots ſhort or wide.

Marks pleaders well (that lengthens ſutes with words)
Lookes far in land, and can true titles ſift,
Sounds deepeſt ſeas, and wades throw ſhallow foords,
And hates thoſe heads, that with great finenes ſhift,
VVealth, praiſe and peace, are Iuſtice handmaids all,
Honor and fame, holds vp milde Iuſtice traine,
Truth on each ſide, ſupports hir from a fall:
And heaunly hope, in hart ſhe doth retain:
Diſdains delay, giues aid and helpe in haſte,
Cuts off the ſnuffe, before the candle waſte.

VVhen

When ſutes do hang, ten yeeres on tenter hookes,
They ſtretch too far, and ſo gro full of holes:
VVhen few words make great ſcrouls & mighty books
Ill newes is brought to many ſilly ſoles.
VVhen cunning caſts, a cloke on open wrong,
Right is put back, and knoes not where to go,
VVhen troth is lapt, in great diſpute too long,
An vpright cauſe may get an ouerthro:
Light is ſeen ſtreight, from darknes if we pleaſe,
And quarrels may be ended ſoon with eaſe.

Though Mine and Thine, makes many brabbles ſtill,
In ſmall ſhort time, each man may haue his own,
Though thouſands run to law on froward will,
Of each mans cauſe, the troth is quickly known,
Though doubts ariſe, in matters of great weight,
Good men may ſoon, decide a doubtfull cace,
But if weake things, like wax we ſtretch an height,
Or on bad ſtuffe, do clap an honeſt face:
A ſtraw may ſeem, as ſtrong to many a one,
As is a ſtaffe, that lame men ſtay vpon.

Gay collors hides, a patched rotten wall,
Faire fained tales, conuaies foule things from ſight,
Sweet ſuger takes, the taſte from bitter gall,
VVrong richly clad, to blindnes ſeemeth right,
Troth troden downe, lifts falſehood vp aloft,
Falſe dice do run, as ſmoothe as trueſt bones,
Fine filed toongs, deceiues plaine people oft,
Fondlings may take, pure glaſſe for preſhous ſtones:
A trim diſcourſe, ſet out for goodly ſhoes,
May quickly mar, the text with glorious gloes.

Plaine words are brought, from plow & country plain,
To finde plaine deedes, a friend to plainnes cace,
In open court, then plainnes doth complain
Of wrong receiud, before true Iuſtice face,
The pleading there, begins, but hath no end,
A yeere or twaine, runs on with reaſons great,
Both parties ſo, much time and wealth doth ſpend,
VVhiles lawyars talk at barr in cold and heat:
The matter oft, ſcarſe woorth a lock of hey,
Begun of nought, doth breed an endleſſe pley.

VVhy

VVhy bright brode day at any hole is ſeen,
Darke night is known, when ſtars in skie do ſhoote,
Both black and white are quickly geſt from green,
The head or hand is eaſly found from foot,
The good and bad as great a diffrence haue,
As chalke and cheeſe. Then is there no great doubt,
Tween right and wrong, ſmall pleading do they craue,
For Iuſtice doom, ſoon finds their natures out:
So is the court diſmiſt of ſuters all,
And mildly ſits the Iudges in the hall.

Long ſutes are like a ſemſtars clue of threed,
That firſt was long a ſpinning of the wheele,
Long twiſting too, to make it ſerue the need,
Long winding vp on thrifty huſwiues reele,
And ouer long a working ſome men ſay,
Yet as the length is long of this ſame clue,
So ſhall you finde an end ſom kind of way,
To ſerue the turne in time and ſeaſon due:
But ſutes do leaue the ſutars all ſo bare,
That halfe vndon world thinks long ſuters are.

The honor of the law leaues long delaies,
A quick diſpatch works many men much good,
VVhen good turns are turnd off to yeers and daies,
They bring diſeaſe, and breedeth no good blood,
VVhat falls out well is welcom at the furſt,
VVhat hapneth ill muſt needs be known at laſt,
And when a man in time doth know the wurſt,
The care is gon, and halfe the harms are paſt,
Admit that lands and goods do lie therein,
Looke what is loſt we haue no hope to win.

Plainnes is beſt, and euer furtheſt goes,
Sleight finds a ſhift, to ſhuffell cards too long,
The ſhorteſt way, vnto the wood who knoes,
And goes about, ſhall do himſelfe great wrong.
No honor more, than get good will of men,
VVith iudgement ſweet, a true-loue knot to knit,
To further that my praier and my pen,
Shall wait vpon the ſeat wherein you ſit:
And poore mens plaints, when ſalued is their ſore,
Eternize ſhall your name for euermore.

FINIS.

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